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Remarks

Claims 1-3, 9-11, 13-16, 22-24 and 26-35 are presented for consideration, with Claims 1, 15, 26 and 32 being independent.

The Abstract has been amended to better reflect the technical features of Applicants' claimed invention.

Independent Claims 1 and 15, along with selected dependent claims, have been amended to more clearly recite Applicants' invention and further distinguish it from the cited art. In amending the claims, the minor informalities identified in paragraph 2 of the Office Action have been attended to. In addition, Claims 26-35 have been added to provide an additional scope of protection. Support for the new claims can be found beginning on page 9, line 5 of the specification.

Applicants note with appreciation that Claims 9-11, 13 and 22-24 are indicated as containing patentable subject matter. These claims remain in dependent form, however, as it is submitted that their respective independent claims are allowable in their own right for the reasons discussed below. Applicants wish to point out, however, that Claims 1 and 15 have been amended to include storing nip position information which relates to an interval between a predetermined reference position located upstream of the nip portion in the transportation path and the nip portion as featured in Claims 9 and 22.

Claims 1, 2, 15 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,467,900 (Askren et al.). Claim 14 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Askren et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,723,129 (Endo et al.). Claim 3 was rejected under § 103 as being unpatentable over U.S.

Patent No. 5,368,403 (Broder et al.) in view of Askren et al. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Applicants' invention as set forth in Claim 1 relates to a printing apparatus having printing means that executes printing on a print medium transported along a transportation path. The apparatus includes upstream transporting means including a pair of rollers arranged upstream of the printing means in the transportation path for transporting the print medium and downstream transporting means arranged downstream of the printing means in the transportation path for transporting the print medium. In addition, storage medium stores nip position information representative of a position of a nip portion between the pair of rollers within the transportation path. As amended, Claim 1 sets forth that the nip position information relates to an interval between a predetermined reference position located upstream of the nip portion in the transportation path and the nip portion.

Claim 15 relates to a printing method for executing printing and corresponds generally to Claim 1. Claim 15 thus includes the step of storing nip position information representative of a position of a nip portion between the pair of rollers within the transportation path, and has been amended to set forth that the nip position information relates to an interval between a predetermined reference position located upstream of the nip portion in the transportation path and the nip portion.

In accordance with Applicants' claimed invention, nip position information is utilized to improve the printing process.

The primary citation to Askren et al. relates to an ink jet printer that includes upstream transporting means (rollers 29 and 39) and downstream transporting means (rollers 35 and 37). In addition, a sliding contact 39 detects the presence of a sheet of recording media at a nip portion of the upstream rollers and provides this information to an electronic controller 51.

In contrast to Applicants' claimed invention, however, Askren et al. does not teach or suggest, among other features, storing nip position information relating to an interval between a predetermined reference position located upstream of the nip portion in the transportation path and the nip portion as set forth in Applicants' Claims 1 and 15. Accordingly, it is submitted that Askren et al. fails to anticipate or render obvious Applicants' claimed invention, and thus reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of Claims 1, 2, 15 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) is respectfully requested.

The secondary citation to Endo et al. relates to a bubble jet recording process and was cited for its teaching of disclosing discharging ink using thermal energy.

Broder et al. relates to a carriage support system for a printer and was cited for its teaching of upstream and downstream transporting means and printing means that executes printing on a print medium transported along a transportation path.

These citations fail, however, to compensate for the deficiencies in Askren et al. as set forth above with respect to Applicants' independent claims. Therefore, without conceding the propriety of combining Askren et al. with either Endo et al. or Broder et al. in the manner suggested in the Office Action, it is submitted that such combinations still fail to teach or suggest Applicants' claimed invention.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of Claims 3 and 14 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 are respectfully requested.

Newly-submitted Claims 26-35 are also submitted to be patentable over the cited art.

Claim 26 relates to a printing apparatus having printing means that executes printing on a print medium, and includes upstream transporting means for transporting the print medium and downstream transporting means for transporting the print medium. In addition, storage means stores information relative to a transported distance after an end of the print medium passes through a predetermined position until it passes through the upstream transportation means.

In Claim 32, a printing apparatus includes a transportation roller to be driven by driving means through a gear train, a pinch roller, and printing means for performing printing on the print medium. In addition, control means controls the transportation roller to repeat a drive and stop by turns, and further controls the printing means to perform printing while the transportation roller is in a stop condition. The control means controls the driving means such that, immediately after an end of the print medium has passed through a nip portion between the transportation roller and the pinch roller, the transportation roller is driven by an excessive driving method beyond a driving method of the driving means corresponding to a backlash of the gear train, thereby performing printing at a position corresponding to a transported amount of the print medium.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that the present invention is patentably defined by independent Claims 1, 15, 26 and 32. Dependent Claims 2, 3, 9-11, 13, 14, 16, 22-24, 27-31 and 33-35 are also allowable, in their own right, for defining features of the present invention in addition to those recited in their respective independent claims. Individual consideration of the dependent claims is requested.

Applicants submit that the present application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration, withdrawal of the objections and rejections set forth in the above-noted Office Action, and an early Notice of Allowance are requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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